



Tenant Participation

This leaflet outlines your rights to be involved and have your say in the way the housing service is run.

The Council is generally referred to as “we” throughout this leaflet. Tenants are normally referred to as “you”.

We recognise the importance of working in partnership with our tenants, both individually and through the residents’ associations. Involving and consulting with tenants leads to the provision of more effective and efficient services.

Tenant Participation Strategy

We have produced a Tenant Participation Strategy that has been drawn up in consultation with tenants’ groups and interested individual tenants.

The strategy has the following aims:

- To give tenants genuine opportunities to become involved in the decision-making process of Housing Services.
- To offer tenants a range of options for becoming involved in policy and service development. This involves involvement at both individual and collective levels, for example, through tenant organisations.
- To ensure tenants’ groups are adequately resourced and supported in order to fully engage in the participation process.
- To continuously develop ways of improving communication and information to tenants to meet their needs.
- To create tenant participation procedures and consultation arrangements that are subject to continuous improvement and review.

Tenants’ / Residents’ Groups

We support and encourage tenant and resident groups in Orkney. We also encourage anyone who would like to take part to join our register of interested tenants. We will provide support and training to any tenants and residents who wish to set up a group.

Registered Groups

We will also keep a register of any groups that are registered tenants’ organisations. Groups wishing to register will have to meet certain conditions.

These include:

- Having a written constitution and a committee of at least 3 people.
- Having a clearly defined area of operation and be open to all council tenants in that area.
- Having proper accounts and have them audited.
- Showing a commitment to represent its members' interests.

We provide support and guidance, including financial resources, training, information packs and access to independent advice and information to any tenants' groups who wish to become registered.

Please contact Housing Services if you want any further information. We have to consult with any registered groups but will also consult with groups which are unregistered.

Any member of the public can view the register and it is open for inspection at Housing Services.

There is also an opportunity to become part of our Residents' Panel. Our Residents' Panel is a small group of tenants / residents who are trained to undertake a role in respect of tenant scrutiny, that is an assessment of our services from a tenant / resident's point of view.

What we will consult with you on

We will consult with you and tenants' groups on all the areas of our housing service and housing policies and procedures that affect you. Some of the main areas are:

- Housing service standards.
- Housing management policies including lettings, transfers, rent setting and proposals for tackling anti-social behaviour.
- The housing repairs and maintenance service.
- Improvement works programme.
- Tenant Participation Strategy.
- Local Housing Strategy.

Ways to have your say

We will use different ways to consult with you and to make it possible for you to participate. These include:

- Consulting with registered tenants' organisations, local resident/tenant associations and interested tenants / tenants' panel.
- Setting up focus groups on specific issues.
- "Road shows" at the local level.
- Local open meetings.
- Surveys or questionnaires focussing on specific issues.
- Continuing to provide quarterly newsletters.
- Attending residents/tenants' meetings.

We make sure that there is training on a range of housing issues available to tenants and tenants' groups to ensure they are able to fully participate.

We will monitor and review the progress of the Tenant Participation Strategy jointly with tenants. This will be carried out regularly and the action plan will be updated each year.

Contacts

Details on our Tenant Participation Strategy are available by contacting Housing Services, Orkney Islands Council, School Place, Kirkwall or by telephoning 01856873535.

Last updated: April 2021.

